

# NTHS Parent Support Network

Stress is something with which we are all too familiar, and the same goes for our teens. Most adults have developed positive and healthy coping strategies to deal with the stressors of everyday life. Our teens, however, are still learning this important life skill. Stress can be positive for teens, as it may motivate them to study for a test, put forth extra effort in extra-curricular activities or navigate social situations. Stress becomes negative when it impacts a teen's ability to manage one or more aspects of his or her life. As parents, it is our job to help our teens identify stressors, learn healthy coping skills and to consistently model positive stress management in our own lives.\*

## TEEN STRESS\*\*

### BECAUSE OF STRESS...



### SOURCES OF STRESS

- Academics
- Friends/Family
- Extracurricular Activities
- Post High School Plans

\*Compared to 5.1 in adults. Stress levels are based on a scale of 1 to 10, 1=little or no stress, 10= great deal of stress.

### Signs of Stress:

- Irritability
- Anger
- Excessive worry or anxiety
- Substance use
- Psychosomatic symptoms
- Insomnia / sleep disturbances
- Disordered eating (overeating or eating too little)
- Neglecting responsibilities / procrastination
- Negative thoughts
- Feeling overwhelmed

### Stress and Substance Use

- ♦ Research indicates that people who experience stress are more likely to abuse alcohol or other drugs, or to relapse to drug addiction.\*\*\*
- ♦ NTHS students report coping with stress as one of the reasons for engaging in substance use.\*\*\*\*

### Talking to Your Teens About Stress\*

1. Recognize your teen's symptoms and talk to them about it.
2. Communicate and discuss balance.
3. Help your teen identify healthy coping mechanisms (e.g. sleep, deep breathing, exercise, etc.).
4. Create some normalcy around stress and provide support when under stress.
5. Model healthy behaviors.
6. If needed, seek guidance from a professional.

Do you have a question that you would like an answer to?  
Submit it [here](#) and look for a response in one of the upcoming newsletters.

For more information contact:

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\*Talking to teens about stress. (2014, February). Retrieved November 10, 2015, from <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/stress-talk.aspx>

\*\*Bethune, S. (2014). Teen stress rivals that of adults. *Monitor on Psychology*, 45(4), pg. 20.

\*\*\*Information from the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

\*\*\*\*Data from the 2014 KW Survey. N=3,127. Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and New Trier Township. The views, policies, and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of IDHS, SAMHSA or New Trier Township.

